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ABSTRACT

Intended to aid librarians, this guide explores the methods librarians can and do use to influence government publishers, printers, distributors, and indexers of government information, as well as those who create and interpret the policies governing those programs. Case studies from Canada, England, and the United States are cited to illustrate the effectiveness of librarian involvement with government information dissemination. Seventeen ways in which librarians can exert their influence are detailed as are several areas in which such influence is needed. References are included. (FM)

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How librarians can influence government printers and publishers and the policies which govern them.

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Librarians can and do influence government publishers, printers, distributors and indexers of government information. Librarians also influence those who create and interpret the policies governing these programs.

Librarians have influence because they speak not for themselves, but for the citizens who use government information. Librarians are perceived by the public as helpful to all and objective in giving service. A librarian in one day may help both the corporation and the agency or group suing the corporation. Librarians are under pressure from citizens to obtain information. Since librarians do not obtain the information for their own use, they have greater weight in dealing with government agencies.

Our friend, Jack Cherns, formerly of Her Majesty's Stationery Office put it this way in his address to us last year.

> Librarians are virtually the specialists in organized management of information, and uniquely able to take a broad view across a field of fragmented interests. Perhaps they could be considered as a professional body of opinion acting almost as guardians of the public interest in the provision of government information. There is no other kind of pressure group in the same field. [1]

Government agency staff sometimes practically beg for input and support from the library community. The U.S. Census Bureau came to the now defunct Public Documents Committee of the ALA and asked them to set up a sub-committee to work with them on plans for the 1970 Census.

The Census Bureau also went to the ALA Government Documents Round Table and offered to work with them in putting on workshops for librarians at the expense of the Census Bureau. This resulted in the beginning of a fruitful relationship which continues to this day. The Census Bureau realized the value of educating the librarians about their information. It was one of the cheapest investments ever made with the biggest return.

Can you imagine what it would cost to hire enough staff to do what the librarians do everyday, at no expense to the Census Bureau?

I would like to present a few case studies to show where librarians have had tremendous influence on a government information program.

Canada

In the Fall of 1978, the Canadian depository system was threatened with a drastic budget cut. The Publishing Centre of the Department of Supply and Services was told by the Canadian Cabinet to cut its $3.9 million budget by $2 million. The Centre proposed to cut $1.2 million or half of the $2.4 million budget for free distribution. They planned on cutting the number of depository libraries from 586 to 293.

According to Judith A. Boettger in an article in Documents to the People, the librarians did not take this lying down.

> The Canadian Library Association Government Documents Committee mounted a campaign in November, 1978 to reveal the crisis situation to libraries, the media, associations, and individuals across the country, and to urge that letters and telegrams of protest be sent to local Members of Parliament and to responsible federal ministers. The Committee emphasised that the proposed reduction in the programme of free distribution to libraries runs counter to the government's policy of providing Canadians with information about their government and country ...[2]

The librarians obviously made an impact. They won. No libraries were cut from the free distribution program. Mr Phillip Leroux, Director General, Canadian Governments Publishing Centre, in testimony before the U.S. Congressional Joint Committee on Printing Advisory Committee on Title 44 Revision, on January 31, 1979 stated that he had received "at least 700 letters" on the subject. When I asked Mr Leroux "Do you get direct advice or do you have a formal way of getting advice?". He replied,

> Yes, but not enough and we are going to establish now, as I understand, three committees, with the library community. You see, these difficulties we are having because of the reduction of

> the expenditures for the depository system have allowed us to meet almost on a daily basis with the library community and we found a lot of good advice there we could make use of ... [3]

In a news release on February 8, 1979 Mr Pierre De Bané, Minister of Supply and Services announced that none of the 586 libraries would be cut. Instead the reductions would be accomplished by,

> First, those organisations which are able to purchase publications from their own resources will cease to receive free ordering privileges; among these categories are departments of the federal government, special interest groups and senior public servants. Secondly, the subsidisation of subscription prices for pariamentary documents, which benefits relatively few Canadians will cease entirely. With these measures I am satisfied that we have eliminated any duplication and unnecessary expenses and we have kept an inportant distribution network open and accessible to the Public. [4]

Mr Leroux was so impressed with the librarians he had met, that he told me he was considering hiring a librarian for his own staff.

England

The publishing, distribution policies and procedures of Her Majesty's Stationery Office have been influenced by a group of librarians called the H.M.S.O. Services Working Party. This seems to be another case where the agency came to the librarians. This time as a result of a letter in the Library Association Record of May 1970 "bewailing the 'cumulated nonsense' suffered by librarians and public alike at the hands of H.M.S.O.. In a footnote to the letter, John Morgan, then H.M.S.O. Director of Publications, regretted the complaints and suggested that he and his colleagues would welcome a meeting with interested librarians in order to talk over the various difficulties and consider suggestions for improvement." [5]

The Working Party has been somewhat successful and has worked on everything from H.M.S.O. bindings to bookstores. It seems to have worked as a lightning rod to draw complaints from all sectors of the library community and channel them into constructive negotiations.

USA

In the United States one of the best examples of librarians influence on the policy makers is the outcome of the fight over the production of depository documents in microfiche. The ALA Government Documents Round Table and the Depository Library Council to the Public Printer and other library groups worked many years to assure that the program would actually materialize. They also worked to see that the quality of the microfiche, the amount of information in the header, and the selection of material to be placed on microfiche would meet the needs of the library community and the public. It took many years, hundreds of letters and meetings to influence all the people involved in making the decision.

There are numerous other examples of how librarians have influenced government information publishers. I am going to talk about some ways librarians can influence and some areas where the librarians should be attempting to influence. I will be giving some examples to illustrate and support the suggestions as I go along.

Suggested ways to exert influence

1) Become one of the policy makers. Run for political office. Aspire for high appointive or civil service office. Librarians can do it as well as anyone else. I gave a speech several years ago to a group of librarians urging them to get politically active. Somewhat later, I got a call from a librarian looking for a job. She told me that she had become so inspired by my speech that she got a job with a Congressman from her home district. When he retired, she decided to run for his Congressional seat. She ran, but was not elected. It was her first try for elected office, next time she will win. Her try was not for nought, even a defeated congressional candidate is treated with great respect on the Hill, and it looks great on a resume. A librarian in the State of New York was more successful in his bid and became a state legislator. He wields considerable influence in getting library legislation through the state legislature. There is nothing like talking to a politician that you don't have to translate for.

2) Take a job with the policy makers, work for a Congressional or Parliamentary committee, for a Minister or Secretary of a major Ministry or Department, become an assistant to a city mayor, state governor or county council member. Don't wait for them to ask you, sell the idea to them. Your research talents alone make you a valuable addition to any staff. Work in a policy position if at all possible. If a policy position is not possible, work as a researcher, a floating librarian. You don't need your own collection to function as a librarian. Then sneak in some policy advice.

My position on the Joint Committee on Printing is a good example. As Special Library Assistant, I am there when policies which will affect hundreds of libraries and thousands of citizen users are decided. I am there when a piece of information or a suggestion will do the most good, before the regulation or the law is passed. I am there to initiate programs and studies which may benefit libraries and library users, which non-library staff would never think of.

For example, it is doubtful that anyone would have considered studying the U.S. Congressional Serial Set to determine if it is still the most effective and economical way to fulfill the need of Congress to preserve its own

documentation (House and Senate documents and reports). At my suggestion, the Joint Committee on Printing authorized an advisory committee to study methods to improve the Serial Set's physical make-up, access to material within the Set, and to reduce its production cost. The committee was composed of representatives from JCP, GPO, the Senate and House Libraries, the Library of Congress, the National Archives Library, and the depository library community. This committee got the policy makers, the producers and the users of the Set together for some intensive discussions.

The committee made a number of recommendations which are now being considered by the JCP. They include 1) Standardization of the Set into one version, instead of two versions, the "A" title, posterity and the "B" title, depository and foreign exchange. Standardization will reduce the cost of an "A" title from $57 per volume to $21 per volume. This will save at least $ 100,00 per Congress. 2) Production of some copies on microfiche. About 265 depository libraries have already expressed a definite interest in getting the material in the Set on michrofiche. This will save at least $ 800,000 per Congress. 3) Combination of the Numerical Lists and Schedule of Volumes of the Reports and Documents of the Congress with the Monthly Catalog of Government Publications and issuance of the indexing for the Set as a yearly supplement to the MC. The unbound reports and documents are already cataloged in the MC. The supplement would provide the complete list of documents and reports, the AACR cataloging for each title and the multiple indexes.

My dear friend Arne Richards, documents librarian at Kansas State University campaigned for years to have Congressional committee prints sent to depositories. It was only after I was hired on the staff of the JCP that anything concrete was done to satisfy his and other librarians pleas.

Working on the inside, I visited 55 committees and explained the rewards of allowing GPO to ride the print order on committee prints for depository distribution. Co-operating would mean that 1) copies for depositories would not come out of committee budgets and their limited copy number of 1000. They had been giving the documents expediting 160 copies to go to depositories and others. They were shocked to learn that libraries

had to pay for those copies 2) the Superintendent of Documents would be able to ride the more popular prints for sale. This gave committee staff a place to send people after their copies ran out. It also kept them from having to go back to press. 3) It gave their publications wide publicity since they would be listed in the Monthly Catalog. Committee chairpersons always want their work publicised.

I used a number of methods to make sure my spoken words were not forgotten. The first was a letter from the chairman of the JCP to the chairpersons of all the other committees urging them to co-operate. The second was persuading the GPO Congressional liaison to write a long overdue handbook for GPO employees detailed to Congress. Most of the committees have one or more GPO employees helping them with their printing needs. This handbook explained that the printer should stamp the committee print "OK for depositories". This worked fairly well for several years, but we still missed some prints. So this year the JCP directed GPO to ride all print orders for committee prints unless they were stamped "not for depository".

These are but a few examples of how policies have been affected from inside the JCP.

3) Write your own legislation. Get a sympathetic legislator to introduce it for you. This is done all the time, more and more recently by librarians. Some recent examples include a bill called the National Library Agency. A former library trustee, and former attorney general for New York state got Senator Kennedy and Senator Javitts to introduce it as a study bill for the upcoming White House Conference on libraries. The bill would include all of the library functions now performed by the Superintendent of Documents.

On the state level in New York, a lot has happened since the Governement Documents Round Table was established in 1972 and its membership decided that it would be a good thing to have state and local documents depository systems in all the states. Over a dozen states have passed state document depository laws.

Librarians in Nebraska, Kansas and Missouri have prepared and gotten legislation passed.

New Mexico's state depository system was established in January 1979. The system is really moving. Sixteen libraries are already in the system. Training sessions for state agency liaison officers and for the new depository librarians have been held. A depository council has been established. Manuals for state agency liaison officers and depository librarians have been prepared and distributed.[6]

The Texas State Library Association Government Documents Round Table prepared recommendations for strengthening the Texas Depository law. The legislation, as of May 1979 was being drafted by the Texas Legislative Council for introduction in the 66th Texas Legislature.

The librarians in the State of Delaware were influential as evidenced by regulations issued by the Delaware Department of State requiring every state agency to make copies of its publications available to the Division of Libraries on demand for distribution to libraries of Delaware.[7]

Librarians on the local bench have been busy too. The Library of Ramapo College of New Jersey was selected by the Bergen County Board of Freeholders as an official depository for all Bergen County documents. Computerized printouts of the documents were planned for the Fall of 1978.

4) Work as a librarian in a government agency

Librarians in government agencies are in a unique position to influence the publishing, printing and distribution policies of their agency. These librarians should learn as much as they can about the mechanics of producing and distributing their agency's publications. They should make friends with the printing and publishing, and creative people. Those who write, design or mandate that a publication be created are eager to see it read. Make sure that they know about the various ways their publications are made known to the public. Get involved in the establishment of agency policies governing indexing and distribution of the publications. Volunteer to provide information on which indexing systems are required by law to index your agency's publications. Volunteer to help write regulations and procedures which will guarantee that the publications get to the indexing operations. Make sure that these procedures are incorporated in the handbooks used by agency personnel. Do not depend upon word of mouth or verbal history.

When a publication is indexed bring the citation to the attention of the author and the editor. Have a special celebration for an author whose first work appears in a national bibliography.

When your agency's publications arrive in the library, check immediately to see if they have been indexed in the appropriate indexes. If not, find out why. Make sure that a copy is sent to the indexing agency. If an indexing agency is doing a particularly good job of indexing your agency's material let them and the policy makers in your agency know it. A pat on the back will do wonders to assure continued rapid listing of your agency's publications.

Participate in co-operative cataloging programs with the major government indexing and cataloging agencies. Often they are not doing a complete job because they just do not have the staff to do it. A co-operative program could benefit you both. Be careful that you establish agreement upon standards and procedures before you start the co-operative program. You can sell a co-operative program to the policy people in your agency by showing that it will save money, provide better access and assure that your agency will get recognition for its publishing efforts. So often in co-operative publishing ventures only one agency gets credit. If you are doing the cataloging you can guarantee at least an added entry.

Get involved in the physical make-up of the publications. Offer a consulting service to agency publishers. Provide them with information on standards for title pages, bibliographic citations, ID numbers, Cataloging in Publication programs, bibliographies. Check the citations in the body of the work to make sure that there is enough information so those attempting to find that material will find it. Your fellow librarians will love you, if you can get your agency to adopt standards. It will make cataloging and retrieving publications so much easier.

5) Identify and share marketing information with government publishers

Librarians have marketing information which government publishers need. Librarians know who is requesting the publications and what they think of them. Librarians get constant feedback from their own customers. Librarians

rate government publications and publishers just like they rate non-government publications and publishers. Because a government publication is free, does not make it worth the effort, time and money to acquire it. An unused free publication is a waste of resources.

A good example of marketing information is the GPO List of Classes of United States Government Publications Available For Selection By Depository Libraries. In my visits to federal agency publishers, authors and public relations officers, I promote the use of this tool in determining the agency's market. They are fascinated with the possibility of learning how many libraries are actually acquiring their publications. They also want to know the types of libraries, their clientele and their geographical location. They want to know what audiences they are attracting.

The agencies see benefits in acquiring this information on a current basis. They can use this information to justify their budget, prove that they are getting to the audience that they are directed by law or agency policy to get to, prove to OMB that their periodical should be continued, and get some idea as to whether they are pleasing the users with specific formats and subject areas.

Toward the end of this year the agencies will be able to get this information from GPO. GPO is implementing an automated system which will provide up-to-date information on what is being selected by which libraries. It will cut down on claims by libraries for missing publications because the librarians and GPO will be working from the same records. This should please the agencies, because they should not get as many direct requests for copies when GPO has an accurate list of what has been ordered.

This system will enable GPO to manipulate the information it has to produce reports on demand for various interests. The reports can be generated by item #/ (key # describing each series), series title, state, Congressional district and by library (complete with address). It will no longer be a tedious manual process to answer the request of an agency for a complete list of the libraries taking that agency's periodical.

Any government or intergovernmental agency running a depository system can use the data it collects in its daily work to satisfy the marketing information needs of the author agencies. If the agencies providing documents for

6) Infiltrate the publishers and printers. Become one of them. Take a job in a government publishing or printing operation. If you can't or don't want to do that, then make every effort to become involved with their activities. Join printing and publishing organizations which include government people. Volunteer to put on programs for printing and publishing organizations. Participate in seminars directed at printing and publishing people. In the United States, librarians have spoken to the Society of Technical Writers (includes those who write government technical reports), the Federal Micrographics Council, various printing, editorial, publishing and public relations groups.

7) Learn to speak their language. Take printing and publishing courses. Many times the instructor will be a government employee. Tour printing and publishing establishments. Make an effort to get out and see the new printing technologies like electronic printing, laser printing, CRT terminals, and word processing. Our courses in Library Schools covering the history of printing and the book, ill-prepare us for the new computer world.

8) Educate any government person willing to be educated about bibliographic control, access, depository systems, and so on. You never know when that person will be in a position to do some good for libraries. Recently a very fine computer systems person got a job in the Energy Information Administration at the U.S. Department of Energy. He had worked for the Federal Library Committee and had worked with GPO on getting Monthly Catalog into OCLC. Thanks to him and the education he received from librarians at FLC and GPO he is making sure that all the EIA publications on microfiche are getting into the depository system.

9) React quickly to government requests for feedback on government policies and regulations. In July of 1978, the Office of Management and Budget asked for public comment on a proposed Federal policy regarding the dissemination of scientific and technical information which results from Federal funds. The bulletin emphasised the role of the National Technical Information Service, ignoring the role of GPO and of the publishing agencies themselves. It said not a word about the depository library system. There was a storm of protest from librarians, agency publishers and private sector interests. The JCP received many letters urging action to protect

the bulletin. OMB withdrew the bulletin for further work. As of August 1979, only a draft revision has been circulated to a choice few. The new draft encourages compliance with title 44 and depository distribution.

10) Volunteer advice. When government advisory committees are set up insist that a librarian serve on them. When the JCP set up an advisory committee to advise it on the revision of title 44, representatives of two library groups were included. This would not have happened if the librarians had not been persistent in giving advice. It wasn't enough to just have a librarian on the staff of the JCP to provide input on library needs.

The advisory committees to the GPO did not just happen. Librarians insisted that the concept of an advisory committee on depository libraries be included in the 1962 depository law. The micropublishing council to GPO came into existence because of the advice of the private sector publishing interests. JCP insisted that librarians and government people be on it to provide a balancing effect.

11) Get newspaper and journal and other reporters to investigate government publishing and printing activities. Librarians got Ralph Nader and his investigators interested in GPO as far back as 1973.. Nader people have done two studies, one in 1975 and the other very recently. They just released a report written by Shawn Kelly called The People's Printer.

12) Get government committees to investigate U.S. Congressional printing and publishing activities. The Senate Governmental Affairs Committee did a study of the publishing activities of agencies of the executive branch. They asked for a complete list of all publications distributed to the public from January 1977 to June 1978. They asked that the information include title, number of copies distributed, and channels used for distribution. The number of titles distributed was 102 thousand publications. It was estimated that 36 thousand publications were not listed in the Monthly Catalog for that time period. The raw data has been turned over to the JCP for further study. We are in the process of checking the titles to determine which ones were not listed in the M.C. The agencies will be requested to provide copies of all those not listed and GPO will be instructed to list them. This is an example of two committees working

together sharing data for two different purposes. Senate Governmental Affairs Committee was interested in determining whether government was propagandizing itself. The JCP is interested in whether the government is keeping the public informed as required under title 44.

13) Write articles for the journals and newsletters which government publishers, printers and policy makers read. Very few of these people read library literature. Try to get articles into the popular press. Recently there have been articles on the U.S. depository system in American Education and on airlines periodical (which was available on the plane to all passengers).

14) Work with other groups to influence public and government opinion. In New Jersey, the Government Documents Association of New Jersey co-operated with the Rutgers School of Library Service and the New Jersey Civil Liberties Union in putting on a symposium on the Right to know in New Jersey. The librarians went on to recommend specific changes to the law.

15) Convince agencies to put on training and information workshops for librarians and others. While you have the instructors captive, ask pointed questions, make suggestions for improvements in policies and procedures. The librarians at a documents workshop in Texas convinced the then head of the Federal Register Office, Fred Emery, to launch an educational program on how to use the Federal Register and related publications. It was so successful that hundreds of workshops were held around the U.S. for anyone who used the Federal Register. The Patent Office was asked to give a two-day workshop at the June 1979 ALA meeting. It was a perfect opportunity to ask some questions about why certain Patent Office publications were withdrawn from the system. The workshops gave librarians and government staff a chance to know each other and find ways of strengthening service to the public. Both groups are concerned about serving the public well.

16) Convince government publishers and printers to hire librarians for

indexing and accessing projects. The Federal Register Office hired a librarian to improve the indexing to the Code of Federal Regulations. Convince non-government publishers who are indexing government information to hire librarians. Information Handling Service hired Judy Russell to produce an index to all of the issues of the CFR back to the beginning. She hired almost 20 librarians and they produced a very useful index. U.S. Historical Documents Press hired Edna Kanely, former editor of the Monthly Catalog to add information to older Monthly Catalogs such as missing Su Doc #/ additional subject access.

17) Advertise your existence and your services. Get government agencies to advertise for you. The Federal Register Office is providing a list of all libraries servicing the Register in the Federal Register.

Suggested areas which need influencing

1) Need to influence them at the creative stage of publishing. It is important to educate them as to what information should be included on a title page. This information includes adequate information on the author and publisher agencies. For example, publishers often leave out the sub-agencies who actually do the work, forget to fully identify the source of the publication, even forget to put on a title page.

It is important to provide them with information on 1) ANSI or other standard title pages, 2) cataloging in publication programs, 3) identification numbers, such as ISSN's, classification numbers, report numbers, special ordering numbers, 4) availability information and addresses.

It is also important to point out the need for 1) wide margins for rebinding, 2) correct microfilming of swing pages, large and double pages, maps and so on, 3) study binding, 4) physical size books which are easy to handle and will not fall apart after a few days of use.

2) Influence at the bibliographic control, the indexing and cataloging stage is crucial. Try to convince them to provide indexing for individaul volumes. Educate them about the requirements to provide their publications to service agencies and libraries for indexing and cataloging. Make sure that all the publications get into the national bibliographic systems. In the U.S. librarians have been quite successful in getting GPO cataloging into the AACR and MARC systems which made it possible for them to be part of the computerised networking systems such as OCLC and Lockheed Dialog. State agencies such as the Kansas State Library are also putting State Documents into national computerised systems using AACR and MARC.

3) Librarians have so far been most active in trying to influence distribution systems. More work needs to be done. There is still a need for depository systems in many jurisdictions. There is still a need for freedom and information access laws in many countries. There is still a need for mechanism for sale of all government publications wanted by the

citizens - at a reasonable cost. There is still the need to lobby for laws which will protect the right of the citizen to remain anonymous in the use of government information. There is still a need to encourage commercial booksellers and jobbers to sell government publications.

Footnotes

1 Cherns, Jack "Government Publishing - An Overview" given to International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions. 44th Congress, 1978, paper number 16/Op/1E. page 10.

2 Boettger, Judith A. "News from Canada" Documents to the People, Vol. 7, number 2, March 1979. page 38.

3. Leroux, Phillip, Statement to U.S. Congressional Joint Committee on Printing, Ad Hoc Advisory Committee on Revising Title 44 during hearing held on January 31, 1979, page 43.

4 "Government Publications to Remain Free to Libraries", Canada, Supply and Services Communique, February 8, 1979.

5. Smith, Barbara E. "British Publications - III. Accessibility and Use" Government Publications Review, Vol. 6 No. 1, page 17.

6 Marsh, Sharon "Documents Groups at the Local and State Level" Documents to the People Vol. 7, No. 4, July 1979, p. 138.

7. Documents to the People Vol. 6, No. 4, June 1978, p. 172.

8. "Ramapo College Named Depository", Documents to the People Vol. 6, No. 4, June 1978, p. 172.

Conclusion

I have not covered every possible way of influencing or area that needs influencing. I am sure you can think of many more. I have found that many librarians do not think of themselves as having the power to influence or shape the structure of the government information world. Librarians have tended to undervalue the expertise, services and collections they have developed. Until recently many librarians did not realize that our services have a "market" value and that many of our imitators are selling similar services. Many of our collections and techniques have been used to produce marketable, commercially sold products. Have we thought of how much money it would cost to replace these collections or gather them together from a scratch. Our efforts and those of our predecessors are very valuable.

We must not underestimate our own powers. In order to influence we must be persistent. We must not give up. You never know when the turning point will come, the magic moment. Those who are pushing policies contrary to ours do not give up. We must outwork, outlast and outinfluence them.